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NEWS RELEASE

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Tax Commission pushes electronic filing

Taxpayers who file state income tax returns online will receive their refunds much quicker than those who send in paper returns, says the Utah State Tax Commission.

"If you file electronically, you can plan on receiving your refund in a matter of weeks," says Charlie Roberts, Tax Commission spokesman. "Those who file by paper may wait several months to receive their refund."

"About 414,000 people in Utah filed their state income taxes by paper last year," Roberts says. "We hope a significant number of those will file electronically this year so they can receive their refunds sooner."

He says because of budget reductions fewer temporary workers are being hired by the Tax Commission. This is the main reason for the delay in paper filers receiving their refunds later.

"The downturn in the economy forces us to hire fewer temporary workers this tax season. Their focus will be in processing online income tax refunds," Roberts says. "Electronic returns are processed faster because of the need for less manual intervention."

The tax commission points out that there are three electronic options available to Utah taxpayers:

- 1) Filing a joint electronic return with the federal income tax
- 2) Purchasing a commercial tax preparation software package or
- 3) Filing for free on the web at taxexpress.utah.gov.

In 2009, 65.3 percent filed state income tax returns electronically of the more than 1.2 million returns.

"Each year we see a steady increase in the percentage of taxpayers filing electronically," Roberts says. "This year we hope to see a major jump."